



# SUBSTREAM

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# BENEATH THE SHADOW

## **SUBstream** / səb'stri:m/

**1.** Something lying undercurrents, that require a deeper investigation and understanding of the hidden and underlying contexts, environment, and systems. **2.** The geographical-historical subjectivities that emerge and flow trans-nationally and influence the (in)formation of social innovation, in continuous cycles of challenging and subsuming into the so-called mainstream. **3.** Our subject position in Surabaya with its long history of trade, resistance, and port cultures, thus the deeply intertwined relations between art, culture, trade, and politics.

# Vibrant Mural on Kampung Soekarno



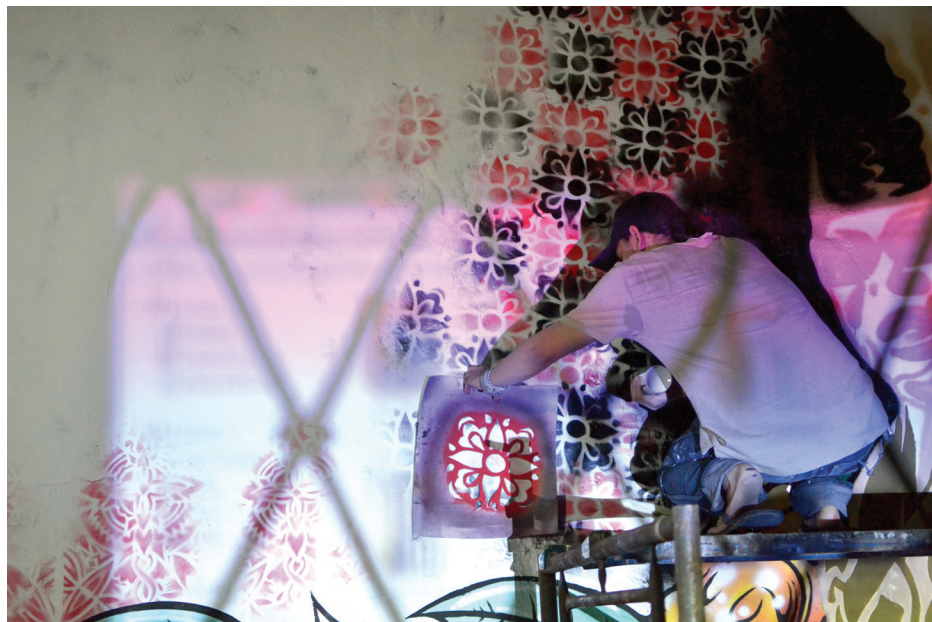
# ADREA KRISTATIANI

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A student.

A group of mural artist that goes with the name of “Serikat Mural Surabaya” was spotted on the alley of Surabaya’s kampung, Pandean. They were drawing a specific theme on the kampong’s wall. It was about Soekarno, the first president and one of the founding fathers of Indonesia. Soekarno was born in this peaceful neighbourhood, at Jalan Pandean IV No. 40, Kampung Peneleh, Surabaya. Until recently, this subject has been scraped from the nation’s history for decades, and many wouldn’t suspect that this peaceful little kampung was where the first president of Indonesia grew. Recently, the kampung had been declared as Kampung Soekarno by the government. Serikat Mural Surabaya started decorating the alleys with some Soekarno’s mural. When they started drawing, their action made the people around the kampong curious. At first, they were starting to sketch the wall with paints, stencil, and using the LCD projector mapping, they turned the sketches into colourful pictures. The murals were concerned about the spirit, thoughts, and life of Soekarno. While most residents in Surabaya consider mural as street art bordering on vandalism, in this case, the mural becomes one of the most important nationalistic elements in Kampung Soekarno. Serikat Mural Surabaya has portrayed street art with strong messages to the viewers. The colourful and meaningful murals now welcome visitors of the kampung, and bring the pride of the spirit of Soekarno in his kampong.











[UN]SEEN



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A month ago, Tataa Chubby, a sex worker, was killed in her rented room in Jakarta. Shortly thereafter, the police managed to arrest the killer through a twitter account that recorded the last transaction of the victim.

Through social media, what we used to think as substream, inapparent and flowing underground, could be tracked and clearly seen. Through media such as Facebook, I can see various communities considered as “other”, at least for me, outside my usual zone. Becoming “other” or substream for me is not about stigmatizing right-wrong or good-bad. It’s a matter of quantity. They are there, but seemingly very small in number to have an influential voice. Thus, they seem to move in silence.

I see that impression in the photographs uploaded to hir account by CKU, a transgender who worked in an NGO dealing with AIDS. S/he uploaded many photos of the activities by the NGO where s/he worked, ranging from health education, to accompanying a person at the late stage of HIV dying in bed. It is a reality that is far from the everyday life that I live. However, by looking at the photos uploaded CKU, a sense of empathy arose in me. At this point, I think the pictures become a medium that draws me to the lives of otherness.

Other photos, I took from a Facebook account belonging to SS, a worker at Perwakos (Surabaya City Association of Transvestites) who also uploaded many photos taken during their community activities. On one picture—also shown here—I saw an impression that transgender can live side by side with the community. Although so far, there is still some stigma as a deviant amidst the surrounding communities.

On the other hand, I also display photos of OKM, a bassist of a porn gore grind band representing blackmetal community in Surabaya. By day, he works as a cooking oil salesperson. In the evening, he is transformed into a bat on dark stages. They have never been covered in mainstream media. Because, for the music industry, they are considered others. However, in the underground, the community continues to grow with each generation. Facebook is one of the social media used by the community as a means of promotion of blackmetal music gigs and merchandise. I also found a lot of photographs that record their live performances.

The last photo was taken from a group page AM in Surabaya. AM is an Islamic community that upholds the role of Sayyid, Hadrami families that are considered as direct descendants of the Prophet Muhammad. The group is very small, so they are only hold a small gathering in the house of the Sayyid. Through Facebook, AM members recorded their activities. Seeing these photos, I feel like being present among them.

Here, I am not a photojournalist who was present and directly photographing their existence. I am being a wannabe anthropologist, trying to understand the life of others through the images and accompanying texts they uploaded on the Internet. Our encounter was facilitated by alternative spaces such as Facebook. I just collected some images they uploaded, sorted and selected it. Like Erik Kessel, a Dutch collector and curator that collected photos collected from flea markets and arranged them so that new meanings emerged from these photos.





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# Happy Faces

senang-senang sekali  
lagi excerpt #3

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photography practitioner, music fan, future diplomat. a graduate of English literature from Airlangga University, currently studying cultural and media studies in Gadjah Mada University. he started photography in 2005 and began documenting the music scene in 2006. In 2015, he had a solo photography exhibition titled “*senang-senang sekali lagi*” (revelling once again) that summarised activities in Surabaya music scene since 2007. “happy faces” featured an excerpt from some of the photographs in the exhibition. denan is now undergoing a training for young diplomat candidate in the ministry of foreign affairs, republic of Indonesia.



living from subcultural activities, especially music, is not easy in Surabaya. The perpetrators are confronted by the fact that they cannot make a living from it. Well, not that technically they cannot, because there are examples of people who can make a living from subcultural music, feed their children, go on holidays, etc. They could live with some compromise with the market, not to be mainstream, but closer to potential markets, let's say high school kids, selling some breath close to the market, so that they can embrace a wider audience without having to sell too much idealism. Not quickly, that would take approximately 5-10 years. But the results can be reaped. Of course it's also backed by great managerial capabilities. There are also some who are not as successful, still can make a living, but just barely.

But what about those bands with "fuck you, we play music we like, straight in your face!" attitude? These bands have a major problem; they just want to play music; couldn't and don't care whether they can make any money from it. The problem goes back to the second sentence in the first paragraph. In addition to the lack of concern for the sales, the fact that the societal pressure from both families and the communities around them, and that the music industry in Surabaya is hardly appreciative (which could be due to their own act, at least that's what I understood from my photography), make them rethink many times to live from music. You can either live from music or give it up and work as usual. They take whatever job they get, as a shopkeeper, as an office worker, even working odd jobs to support their music. Part-time musician, part-time blue/white/what collar worker, full-time happiness and pleasure seekers.

What they do remind me of the mods subculture (and other working class subcultures in general) who work to go to the club dancing accompanied by northern soul, downing mdma (cmiiw, I forget exactly what the substances are), do the scooter run. Tumults with rockers before returning to work. Revelling once again before beating their asses off once more next week. the same thing happened in Surabaya, not much different, come to the gigs, dance, drink, have fun.

They are all looking for a fun weekend, remove the stress from work, college, and life routines, be themselves, defy existing rules, create their own rules. All happy and merry, they gain gain new friends, they interact, and revel in the fun in less than 6 hours at the end of each week.



akhmad alfan Rahadi, usually called alfan. A former student in dentistry, who is now a student of literature in Malang. A unique person. A mover of local gigs and scenes. An anomaly because he is hard to understand, and he also likes to do strange things. Photos taken at the gig *aku ingin jadi astronot tapi aku gila* (I wanted to be an astronaut but I'm mad) at c & r cafe, Pucang, Surabaya, 4 June 2011.



usually called Cupu, I forgot his real name. A personnel of Mooikite. Taken at the gig *aku ingin jadi astronot tapi aku gila* (I wanted to be an astronaut but I'm mad) at c & r cafe, Pucang, Surabaya, 4 June 2011



Wahyu Gunawan, usually called gugun. A drunkard, an aspiring writer, and an observer of the local art and subculture scenes. Now living in between Surabaya and Jogjakarta to complete his projects. Photos taken at the event *fete de la musique* which was held on 21 June 2011 in CCCL darmokali street, Surabaya





Rakhmad bi septian, better known as Kuro. One of the many kuros that I know. He used to be called as kuro akhlak hewan, now better known as kurotor. One of the motors of milisi foto-copy. He used to live a reckless life, now not so. Photo taken at the gig black box held by hima ide its, 28 June 2009 at Matchbox coffee & friends

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A contributor at ayorek.org who likes to weave yarns, which then pushes her to initiate Arisan Jari, a periodic handicraft workshop, with her friends.

Working as a reporter-photographer at Merdeka FM radio, she likes to photograph anything from music bands to signages and stickers on trucks and trailers that she found. Sometimes she also creates comics about her misfortunes and shames.





## Haute Couture

This is not the display of the latest collection from a retail apparel on an unfashionably fashionable unfinished background. It is a hanging laundry in kampung—found in a small alley in Jalan Sasak, Kampung Arab region in Ampel, Surabaya, the clothesline was owned by the inhabitants of the alley. The narrow width of the alley ( $\pm 1.5\text{m}$ ) restricted the airing space for the normative drying style in horizontal rows with considerable spacing. The solution seemed similar to a display on a wall, like paintings hanging in the living room. This clothesline belongs to the first house closest to the entrance of the alley, which turned out to be occupied by more than one household. You can imagine the busy conditions inside the house. Perhaps the number of family personnels in the house also contributed to these clothesline being “accompanied” by a number of winnowing and other kitchen utensils in an already crowded kitchen. With this kind of clothesline, you can argue about the inherent street fashion in this alley—with the pink negligee on ‘display’, who knows if the housewife next door might be staring at it from her house, while imagining how airy and dazzling she would be wearing it while doing her cooking, would her husband like it.



### **Assalamualaikum City Street**

Met this group of women while walking around randomly in the afternoon, about 3 pm. A group of Qasidah mothers, either they were returning after a competition, or touring around the district (the second option, however, is unlikely, since touring Qasidah usually accompanied a parade, of which there was none that day), chanting Arabic songs over a pick-up that ran at a speed of about 20 km/hour. The sound was loud and vibrant without the need for additional sound system, in contrast with their tired faces, some visibly glancing up searching for possible acquaintances, or anyone on the street, so they could have some excuse to stretch and wave their arms—a recognition and a stretch at once. They put together a uniform, Muslim dresses in shades of red, seemingly expressing a degree of sagesness, despite being in the back of a pick-up. Yet the back of the pickup had the name of one of the most famous prison islands plastered in a kitsch horror, mystical typeface, inciting amusement and pity, the feel of a prisoner. In a colour so matching with the uniform worn. Nevertheless, they were very fascinating, holding the attention of many people on the road. Thank you for the delightful entertainment that afternoon!



## **Hoarders**

It seemed that being human is no longer important, the important thing is to have all things recorded. The Upstairs (a famous Indonesian band) said, “Everything is recorded, never die”. Perhaps because we’re so scared of death, we record everything to relive that moment in future. Everyone, with a small box that isn’t human but can remember, expect to pass on those memories to their children and grandchildren, at some point, later anyway, so there we have the ‘proof’. Just use Auto, I don’t really understand, just so that it’s clear and sharp, and it looks good on the neck. Eeh, it turns out we managed to take a selfie! Great, fortunately we managed to take photos of the moment. Ah, but, I’m sorry, son, grandpa forgot what it was like to live back then.





### **I Hope You're Satisfied**

In Indonesia, itinerant food vendors not only exist in the form of roving wheelbarrows, carts, motorcycles, bicycles, three-wheeled motorcycles, cars, and foodtrucks. There is also a peddler who moved from one place to another on foot. The type of goods traded are various, ranging from meals, snacks, buckets, clothes, even clothesline. This woman was one of them. At that time late at night, the woman looked like she had just served her last buyers and had cleaned up her merchandise. Buckets, wooden tray, newspapers, and a few pieces of banana leaves, she seemed like a food vendor. When you buy food from itinerant food vendor with this mode of transportation, you might wonder about the level of hygiene and cleanliness, since the ingredients have not been properly closed, only covered with a flapping plastic sheet. Taste-wise, it's also so-so, nothing special. But if you imagine how far the woman has walked until you finally encounter her and you take the time to buy her merchandise, the taste may feel like support. And most importantly, do you really have food coming at you without asking elsewhere?



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is a graphic designer at Butawarna, a design cooperative unit that aims to develop design practices and dialogues. He also works as Visual Director at C2O library & collabative, an independent library and a collaborative lab, where he has co-founded, curated, and directed one of its major programs, Design It Yourself Surabaya (DIYSUB) Conference, an annual design conference and festival designed to encourage and disseminate factual and contextual design dialogues in the city. He serves as an Artistic & Communication Director at Ayorek!, a bilingual urban knowledge network platform, and as a review board coordinator at the Surabaya branch of ADGI (Indonesian Graphic Designer Association). In early 2015, he curated Perak Project, an art exhibition that aims to explore the fluctuating role of Surabaya as a port city.

















# COLO PHON

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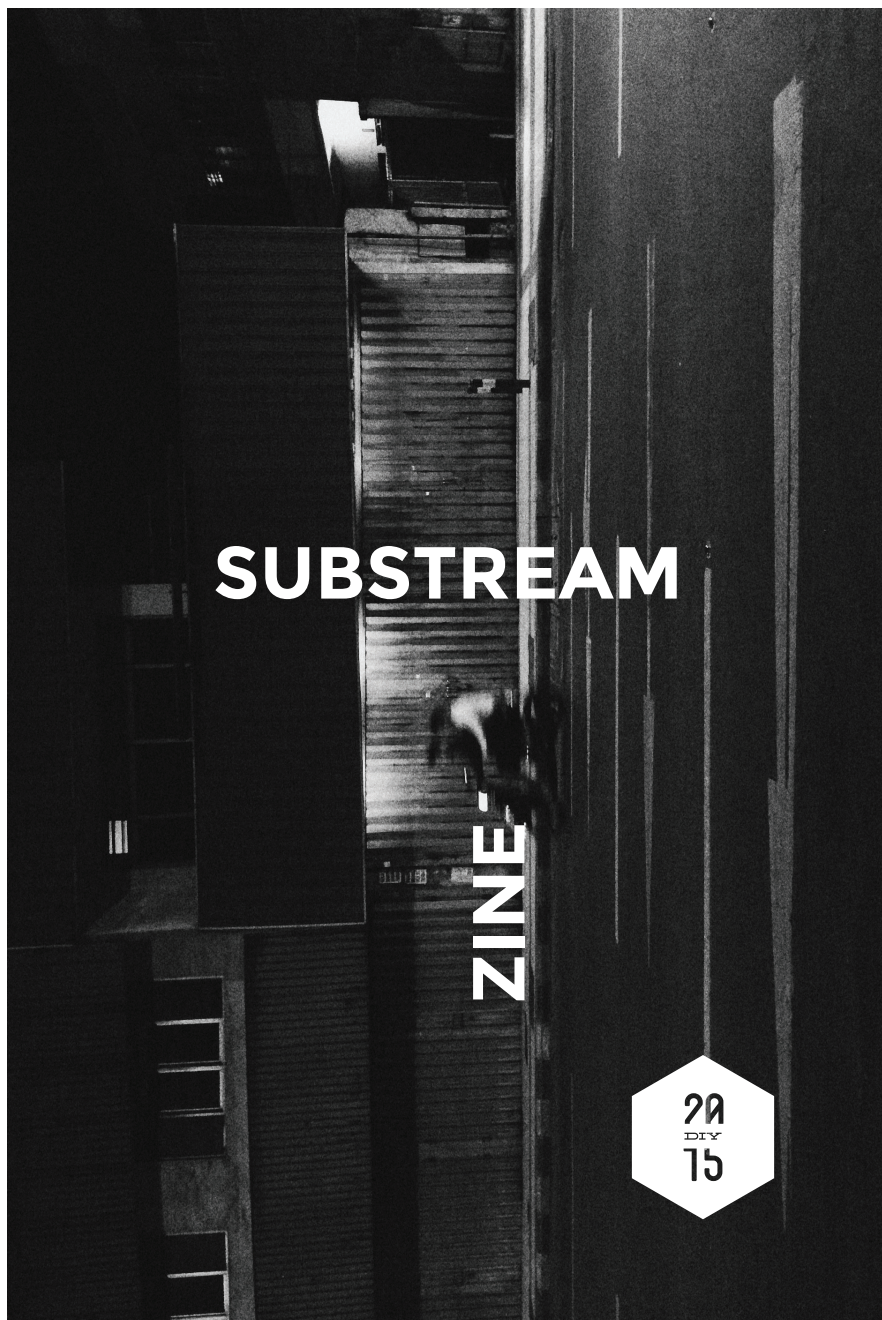
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